

## **I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS**

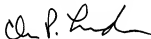
Claims 1-30 were pending. Claims 1-3, 10, 12, 14-16, 22, and 28-30 are canceled. Claims 4-6, 8, 9, 11, 13, 17-21, and 27 are amended. Support for the amendments can be found in the claims as originally filed. Claim 27 is withdrawn from consideration. Claims 4-9, 11, 13, 17-21, and 23-26 are currently under examination.

## **II. RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT**

Applicants elect to pursue Group I (claims 3-16) drawn to an isolated polynucleotide comprising a chimeric GB virus B (GBV-B) polynucleotide encoding a virus and further elect embodiment C (claims 6, 7, 22, and 23) directed to a chimeric GBV-B virus comprising domain III of the hepatitis C virus 5' NTR. Applicants reserve the right to pursue non-elected claims 1-2, 17-21, and 24-30 in a divisional application.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned agent at (512) 536-3167 with any questions, comments or suggestions relating to the referenced patent application.

Respectfully submitted,



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